

**UWI BUILDING STANDARDS PROJECT**  
**October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2002**  
**Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees-** Bob Raymer, CBIA (CM)  
Dave Walls, HCD (CM)  
Don Oaks, SoCal FPO (CM)  
Forrest Craig, Novato FPD/NorCal FPO (CM)  
Dick Hayes, CDF Public Education (IP)  
Dick Harrell, Wildland Fire Services (IP)  
Rodney Slaughter, SFM  
Leslie Haberek, SFM  
Kate Dargan, NorCal FPO/CDF-Napa County (CM)  
Tonya Hoover, Norcal FPO/Moraga-Orinda (CM)  
Melissa Frago, SFM

**Review of Previous Meeting-**

- Determine level of commitment from committee members
- Future meeting schedule
- Placement of regulations
  - Chapter 7A CBC
  - Add text references
  - Article 86 CFC
- Is the intent of the enabling laws to require all buildings in a wildland area to be subject to the new regulations?
  - Pending legal opinion
- Committee to determine scope
  - Scope - applicability on the ground
  - Purpose – what are the regulations meant to do?
  - Objectives – how do the regulations clearly address scope and purpose?
- HCD affected regulations – HSC 50455.6, HSC 17958.8 (review)

**Action Items-**

- **Next meeting will be a two-day workshop November 18, 10am-4pm and November 19, 8am-2pm (all)**
- Scope, purpose, objectives (all)
- Define “Wildland Area” for applicability (SFM)
- Identify items/components of a building affected by these regulations (all)
  - Roofs
  - Walls
  - Windows
  - Doors
  - Eaves, Vents
  - Ancillary Structures (Exterior Stairs, Fences, Gazebos, Decks, etc.)

**General Discussion-**

- (Oaks) Definitions: Fire protection plan definition was struck from draft – should we include in proposed regulations even though it's defined elsewhere?
- (Oaks) Define Wildland Area via SRA plus definition determined by local authority for applicability in LRA as needed

- (Craig) Create separate code section to address how to designate wildland areas.
- The issue of statutory references and associated mapping needs to be discussed and resolved as part of this project.
- (Raymer) Model ordinance preference over regulations. Applicability to statutorily defined Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones preferred.
- (Harrell) Western Fire Chiefs have adopted definitions for interface, intermix, etc.
- (Harrell) For purpose of this code, ignition resistance is more vital than defensibility, due to the fact that firefighter assistance is often not available in a wildland fire scenario
- (Raymer) Clear definitions based on statute will minimize the ability of opposing forces (i.e. manufacturers) to delay implementation of these regulations. Diversity of support will increase chances of passage through CBSC.
- (Harrell) Large developers and realtors might potentially oppose these regulations. Insurance industry depends on the company and their experience.
- (Walls) HCD main concerns are surrounding affordability of housing.
- (Craig) Concerned about comments on 1 hour and 4 hour ratings. This project is about addressing components and issues that are not covered by existing fire rating methods, which don't address the extremes of wildland fire.
- (Raymer) Performance approach is widely accepted and associated instruction is increasing. This project looks at fire resistance vs. non-combustibility. Minimum Class C roofing bill was a very controversial issue at the time, but it turned out that very few local jurisdictions took issue with it.
- (Haberek) Upon review of UCFPL vs. CBC Class A standards, they are not very different, but it's an application and system component issue more than a materials issue.
- (Dargan) If proposed standard eliminated wood siding, for example, there will be a big issue with consumers and forest products industry.
- (Haberek) It is the application and performance, not the material type that must be complied with due to these regulations.

### **Scope Discussion-**

- Include "performance based" in scope? Or simply "This chapter"
- "Wildland" definition is extremely broad: how will conditions and/or applicability be determined?
- (Walls) Energy Commission zoning and mapping/Seismic state mapping identifies areas where their regulations are applicable – uniform throughout state. Where would resources be available to industry folks needing to look up these regulations and their applicability?
- (Haberek) These regulations would be a basis for local adoption and application, not a cure-all.
- (Dargan) If regs are embedded in the body of the code, it will be adopted and mandatory as a minimum for the state. A chapter usually contains a detailed description of where and when the regs would be applied.
- (Dargan) This will give locals a broad description of the areas and application. They will decide how to construct the remainder of the ordinance, which will require locals to develop procedures to implement at their level. Can our intent describe/reflect this approach?

- (Slaughter) California standard is to define wildland hazard severity by fuels, weather and topography – these conditions are dynamic and need to be specific to the local area, approach and definition of these areas.
- (Raymer) OAL and CBSC will want clarity on this issue. If a model ordinance, this will not be such an issue, but if in body of code, this will need to be crystal clear.
- (Raymer) Flood zones are defined and clear – this should be the same. Will anyone be able to find out what the locals are applying?
- (Slaughter) Perhaps all of California should be designated as a VHFHSZ and fully developed & non-combustible areas could be excluded.
- (Harrell) The definition almost has to be local for logical application.
- (Slaughter) Maybe the political issues experience in past mapping projects could be minimized if the applicability to certain areas could be dictated by the state rather than decided at the local level.
- (Hoover) Implementation and enforcement of VHFHSZ statute is a local problem.
- (Losh) Is AHJ language too broad? Should SRA be used as part of the definition for applicability?
- (Dargan) How do we narrow this down to where it applies? SRA will cover most areas. LRA areas do not by and large contain UWI areas.
- (Hoover/Oaks) Not true. Many LRA areas contain large amounts of UWI.
- (Walls) Does AHJ=City, county, building official, fire marshal, etc.?
- (Raymer) Most review and approval of development will be done by building official, not fire marshal. Likely this will result in additional local fees for plan review.
- (Hoover) Disconnects between building and fire officials often result in overlooking certain regulations
- (Oaks) This issue is critical to resolve, since this could result in halting of projects and/or reinforcing problems between building and fire officials.
- (Slaughter) Based on experience, isn't contacting both officials standard procedure?
- (Raymer) No. This can impact both large and small builders, and result in delays to projects.
- (Walls) Should be ratified by local city or county.
- (Haberek) Is anything we put in the regulations going to fix the local disconnect between fire and building officials?
- (Hoover) Language should be specific as to AHJ.

#### **Considerations-**

- State (SFM) definition of WHERE regulations are to be applied: maps, local ordinance, etc.
- Enforcement: to what extent do fire and building authorities participate?
- What is our measure of success? Reduce number of lost homes, target all fires or only worst fires?
- Maintenance of defensible space is still an issue with overall fire protection.
- Educate fire and building officials as to their role in enforcement – hierarchy?
- What do we lose in wildland fires? Primarily residential structures?
- What environment results in most loss? Grasslands vs. heavier fuel types?

- Energy commission recommends close vegetation for shading – other entities also recommend tactics that are contrary to defensible space and fire protection.
- UCFPL coordination of test protocols to standards
  - Rework test protocols into standards while preserving their original integrity
  - Placement in Chapter 35? References from Chapter 7?
  - Guisasola and Raymer may be able to provide resources to review this portion
  - Flame source in testing is constant as opposed to wildland fire heat flux – can knowledge gained from UCFPL vegetation fire testing augment this process?
  - How was this done in IFCI code development? Mostly taken from previous iterations of other publications, not based on science.

**Additional Parties for Notification-**

- CALBO-Steve Jensen, Vic Peterson
- DSA? Re: schools
- Architects (AIA)
- Wood products industry
- Insurance industry
- Glass, glazing industry
- Vent industry
- Energy Commission
- CDF-FRAP (Jeff Harter)